

# The impact of enrolment of students from New South Wales at the University of Southern Queensland

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## Introduction

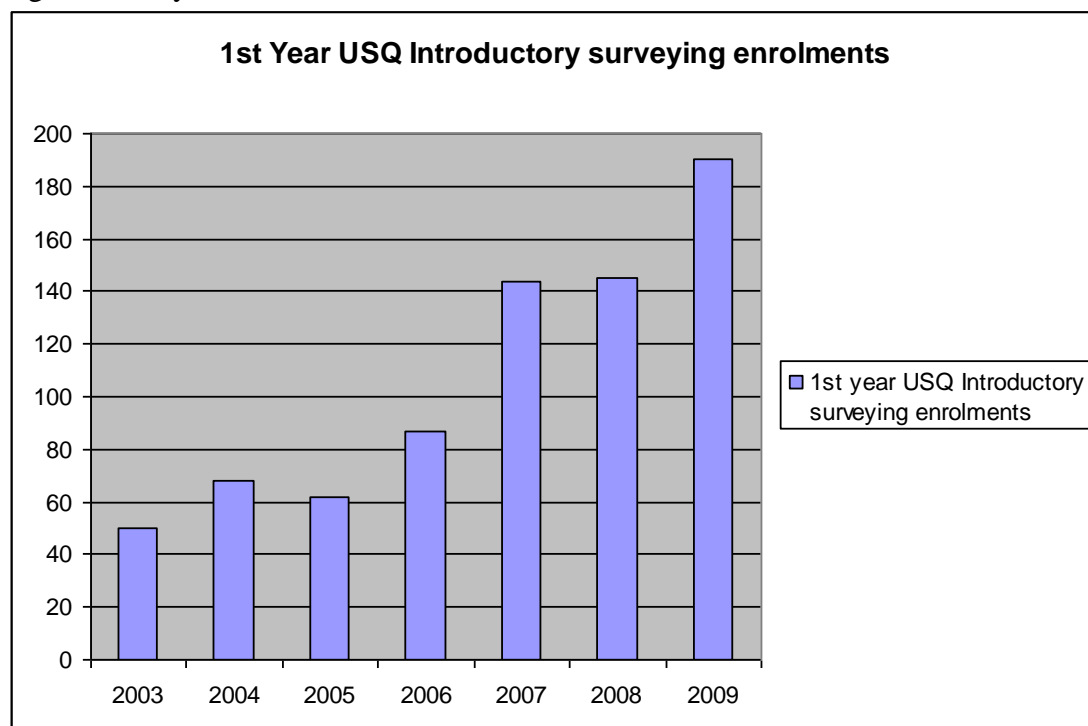
This article will examine the impact of enrolment of students from New South Wales at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) across the surveying programs at USQ.

The shortage of trained professionals and tradesman across a wide range of occupations in Australia is widely acknowledged, the surveying profession is just one profession identified by the federal government. Consequently, enrolment in surveying programs at USQ has been strong with approximately a fourfold increase in total 1<sup>st</sup> year enrolments from 2003 to 2009.

## First Year enrolments

The increase in total 1<sup>st</sup> year enrolments has been primarily confined to the distance education mode of study. The distance education mode enrolments have increased dramatically whilst on-campus enrolment has remained static within a confined range. Figure 1 below illustrates the enrolment in the first year introductory surveying course at USQ, across both modes of study (distance and on-campus) and the total number of students. Some of the increase can be explained by the increased presence of engineering program students taking the course as an elective subject as part of their program.

Figure 1: 1<sup>st</sup> year enrolments across all modes and total student numbers 2003-2009.



## Impact of NSW student enrolments in USQ programs

The total number of students enrolled in surveying programs from New South Wales represents a significant proportion of the total student cohort at USQ. The proportion of students resident in New South Wales as opposed to total survey students at USQ is approximately 25%. This figure represents a significant percentage and especially as a gross figure of 164 students across all survey programs, see Table 1 below. USQ offers programs in surveying from 2 year to 4 year full-time study programs (or 4 year to 8year part-time study) as the Associate Degree in Spatial Science (2 year program, ADSS) to a Bachelor Spatial Science Technology (3 year program, BSST) to a full Bachelor Spatial Science Degree (4 year program, BSPS). For all intensive purposes there are an equal number of enrolments in the full degree BSPS program as there is in the associate degree ADSS program.

The surprise lies in the number of students from NSW studying in USQ surveying programs. The student numbers at USQ in surveying represents a significant proportion of the total survey student cohort in NSW studying across all tertiary surveying programs.

It is significant to observe in Table 1 that whilst NSW represents approximately 25% of the total survey student cohort, the NSW proportion increases significantly to 33% of the students in the 4 year BSPS program. The implication of the proportional increase lies with the intention to head down a cadastral registration path by students and also the impact of NSW TAFE and the articulated pathway for entry to USQ programs.

Table 1: Proportion NSW students to total USQ students by both student numbers and 4 year degree program.

	<b>NSW USQ</b>	<b>USQ total</b>	<b>% NSW to USQ</b>
<b>All students/programs</b>	164	663	25%
<b>BSPS program students</b>	65	198	33%
<b>BSST program students</b>	35	198	18%
<b>ADSS program students</b>	64	198	32%

Many NSW TAFE surveying diploma students seek to upgrade their TAFE diploma to a tertiary degree via enrolment in USQ programs. The NSW TAFE system provides a solid grounding for an articulated pathway to tertiary programs leading to registration as a land or mine surveyor. For example USQ has had some very good students and valuable professional members whom have articulated from NSW TAFE. For NSW TAFE students, USQ has well identified articulation pathways, for example the 2 year Advanced Diploma in Surveying NSW TAFE will receive 1.5 years of credit in the full degree Bachelor of Spatial Science (Surveying) program.

Members may be interested in the geographic spread of students. As expected the majority of USQ survey students are located in the Sydney and Hunter regions extending along the mid-North and Tweed coast regions, see Figure 2.

Figure 2: Spread of USQ survey enrolments across regional centres in NSW.

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All the students in Figure 2 study by the distance mode of education, generally on a part-time basis. Distance education represents a flexible mode of study to satisfy the goal of achieving a recognised qualification whilst working to support your lifestyle and your present residential location. For further information on USQ programs of study you can visit the USQ web address:

<http://www.usq.edu.au/handbook/current/eng.html> or the faculty web address:

<http://www.usq.edu.au/faculty/engsurv/> and for information on admission you can access the web address: <http://www.usq.edu.au> in the future students menu option.

## Conclusion

USQ and NSW TAFE through an articulated pathway is a valued source of sufficient numbers to meet the demand for spatial services provided by registered land surveyors in NSW.

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